

Message Text

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17

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-11 OMB-01 SAM-01 /076 W

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R 080715Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7722

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY RABAT

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SS, BC

SUBJECT: BOTSWANA VIEWS ON THE WESTERN SAHARA

REF: STATE 050459

1. FRONT-PAGE STORY IN MARCH 5 ISSUE OF GOVERNMENT-PUBLISHED BOTSWANA DAILY NEWS REPORTS BOTSWANA MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS ARCHIE MOGWE AS SAYING THAT THE BOTSWANA GOVERNMENT WILL GIVE CONSIDERATION ON WHETHER TO RECOGNIZE THE GOVERNMENT PROCLAIMED BY THE POLISARIO FRONT IN THE WESTERN SAHARA. MOGWE IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT CERTAIN FACTORS WILL HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED FIRST. "IF POLISARIO WERE TO BE RECOGNIZED, IT WOULD HAVE TO BE RECOGNIZED NOT AS A MOVEMENT BUT AS A GOVERNMENT BECAUSE THEY ARE ALREADY FREE."

2. WHEN QUERIED ON THE QUESTION OF RECOGNITION BY OAU MEMBER STATES, MOGWE SAID THAT BOTSWANA BELIEVES IN SELF-DETERMINATION AND THAT IT IS THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE OF WESTERN SAHARA TO DETERMINE THEIR OWN FUTURE, ADDING THAT THE PEOPLE OF WESTERN SAHARA HAVE ALREADY EXERCISED THIS RIGHT. ACCORDING
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TO THE STORY, MOGWE ALSO SAID THAT IT WAS NOT THE BUSINESS OF

THE OAU TO RECOGNIZE A GOVERNMENT OR A MOVEMENT COLLECTIVE
"BUT IS IS THE RIGHT OF EVERY MEMBER STATED TO DECIDE WHETHER IT
RECOGNIZES OR NOT." HE SAID THAT THE OAU RECOGNIZES THE RIGHT
OF THE PEOPLE TO DETERMINE THEIR OWN FUTURE AND THAT THE BODY
WOULD "REGARD AS AN AGRESSOR ANY STATE THAT WANTS TO ANNEX
OR GRAB WESTERN SAHARA."

3. COMMENT: MOGWE FORMULATION APPEARS TO BE IN LINE WITH
OAU POSITION PARA 1 REFTEL BUT LEAVES INDEFINITE BOTSWANA'S
INTENTIONS REGARDING ULTIMATE RECOGNITION OF FRONT"GOVERNMENT.
BOLEN

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